

Guide Book on Your Visit to Bangladesh - *A Fulbright Experience*



The American Center
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Bangladesh

Introduction

Welcome to the Fulbright Program. You have been selected to participate in a highly challenging academic experience that will have a lasting impact on your life. Those who have gone before you are just as excited about your trip, since they know what awaits you in Bangladesh – the sights, sounds, scents, tastes, and tactile impressions of an ancient civilization. Bangladesh and her people will remain with you forever.

Most of the Bangladesh Fulbright participants have never visited the country and have a myriad of questions about the program and travel. To assist you in your planning we have taken their reactions into account when forming this resource.

The following pages include suggestions and ideas to enrich your experience and assist in smooth traveling. The program has been planned to provide the best possible experience. We hope that these suggestions will be useful to you.

Live every moment of your trip fully and when you return keep connected with us. A past participant said that this program was the best gift of his life. We hope this experience will have a similar impact on you.

“Tomorrow the sun will rise on a deeper friendship between America and Bangladesh.” U.S. President Bill Clinton – March 20, 2000

The American Center Dhaka, Bangladesh

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The Fulbright Program

As the end of World War II neared, Senator J. William Fulbright introduced a Congressional bill entitled the Surplus Property Act of 1944. The Surplus Property Act of 1944 was signed into law by President Henry S. Truman on August 1, 1946 as P.L. 584 of the 79th Congress, 2nd Session, 1946. Three major provisions of this act were:

1. authorizing the Department of State as the disposal agency for U.S. surplus war material located outside the U.S.;
2. authorizing that surplus property which was left in foreign nations at the end of the war could be retained by the nation and costs could be paid to the U.S. in foreign currency;
3. authorizing the Department of State to “enter into executive agreements with foreign governments for the purpose of providing, for the formation of foundations or otherwise financing ‘studies,’ research, instruction and other educational activities of or for American citizens in other countries or of such countries in American institutions overseas; and the financing of transportation for visitors from such countries to attend educational institutions in the U.S.”

Senator Fulbright’s rationale for presenting such a creative and unusual solution to the problem of property disposal arose from his experience as a Rhodes scholar. Education was the area in which the promotion of international relations could have the broadest impact. Thus, he proposed the Fulbright Commission, which was to “select students and educational institutions qualified to participate in a program and to supervise the exchange program authorized therein.”

In the fall of 1960, the Fulbright Program was almost 15 years old and needed new provisions, as the Surplus Property cache had disappeared and the program itself warranted expansion. Under a Ford Foundation grant, the Committee on University and World Affairs was established in 1959. Recommendations from the resultant report included:

4. create new legislations in international education and foreign aid;
5. create a closer coordination of all educational exchange programs such as Fulbright, National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, U.S. Department of Education, Organization of American Studies, and UNESCO.

Thus, there is considerable honor and responsibility accompanying your selection as a Fulbright participant. You are among a select group of people chosen to carry on a tradition of fostering international understanding.

From the Regional Security Office (RSO) American Embassy Dhaka, Bangladesh

Welcome to Bangladesh! In this new environment, the Regional Security Office, stationed at the American Embassy, will serve to protect your safety and security, along with promoting personal security awareness. General warnings and precautions must be taken throughout the country, as crime and violence exist in all regions. While Americans are typically not targeted, they can become in danger if not appropriately aware of their surroundings.

During your stay in Bangladesh it is important that you maintain a relationship with the U.S. Mission in order to successfully participate in the program. This involves close contact with The American Center and the Regional Security Office. Upon arrival, you will meet with Officers from both offices. This will include personal security in-briefs between the RSO and all Fulbrighters. In this briefing you will receive detail on issues associated with personal security awareness, followed by a very detailed environmental overview. It is vital that you attend this scheduled brief. We also advise you to review the current American Embassy Dhaka Consular Information Sheet (CIS), available at the following link:

<http://travel.state.gov/bangladesh.html>

This provides a good overview for you to review prior to arrival. Updates are also available online. Please make sure to note additional links on the bottom of the CIS web page offering additional tips for travelers to South Asia.

In addition, all Fulbrighters are encouraged to follow general rules of safety to avoid potential hazards. These include:

- Vary your daily routines of shopping, errands, personal needs; be unpredictable.
- Keep doors locked and windows closed at your residence and in your vehicle.
- Maintain a low profile.
- Be alert to what is going on around you; always be aware of your surroundings.
- Never give personal information, names, addresses, numbers in an open setting.
- Keep all of your valuables secured in an interior safe or locked container.

Please browse the information provided on the Travel Advisory Bulletin, especially the links to the Personal Security, Street Safety, and Vehicle Security advisories. It is useful to the greater American community, such as yourself, in addition to Embassy personnel, and can be found from the U.S. Embassy Dhaka homepage or at:

<http://www.usembassy-dhaka.org/state/WardAnnt.htm>.

It is crucial that all participants maintain their contact and relationship with the Embassy personnel throughout their experience using the contact information provided in this booklet. If you plan to travel, please inform your contacts so that you can be reached in the case of an emergency. In this way we hope to work together to provide you with the most rewarding and secure Fulbright experience possible in Bangladesh.

Information About Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the world's most densely populated countries. There are 1,283 people per square mile – a figure that rises to 1,700 per square mile when the land unsuitable for habitation because of flooding is removed. If ever there was a people who have had to learn to apply the maxim “Be tolerant with your neighbor” it is the Bangladeshis.

Bangladeshis endure famine, flood, pestilence, cyclone, humidity, and baking sun with fortitude and a smile. Those who have jobs are industrious and hard-working because they want to improve themselves and the quality of life for their families. The extended family is extremely important and respect amongst family members is strong.

The Muslim religion affects all aspects of life in Bangladesh. Dhaka has been called by many “The City of Mosques.” So it is important for visitors to have a general understanding of Islamic history and law, especially since there are some aspects which may affect the traveler. Islam is all-pervading. It governs a Muslim's daily habits and his/her social, political, and religious life. The Quran forbids alcohol, pork, gambling, lending money at interest, and describes the rules for marriage and divorce. It also forbids religious images or depictions, which is why there are none in Bangladesh. Instead, mosques and other important buildings are decorated with Islamic art such as calligraphy. Many older Bangladeshi women still wear the burkha or veil, especially in rural areas, thereby being “in purdah.” Even women not wearing the veil may well cover their heads with part of their sarees as a symbolic act, and women do not generally shake hands with men.

The Bangladeshi people are also quite friendly and hospitable. Visitors are often surprised by their willingness to share whatever they have with their new friends, even if they do not have much of their own. This openness should not be mistaken as a fake friendship with ulterior motives. Most genuine Bangladeshis are as curious to learn about you as you are to them. Take advantage of your opportunities to bond with real Bangladeshi folk, and do not forget to return the favor to your friends.

For more facts and information on the country of Bangladesh, its people, climate, government, economy, and other topics, please visit The CIA World Factbook online at the following address:

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bg.html>

What to Bring...



Clothing

In Bangladesh, both men and women tend to dress conservatively. One should dress modestly in all locations outside of the home and international clubs in accordance with the culture. Leave behind your winter clothes unless you plan on traveling to cooler parts of Asia. Excellent quality clothes may be tailored and purchased locally to your liking. Most Bangladeshis wear sandals as a result of the heat and rain, and you'll find this especially appropriate in the monsoon season of mid-June to mid-October. Streets often flood and your trail will be muddy. It is wise to bring a few dependable pairs that you do not mind damaging, along with your other shoes and sneakers for daily activities.

For Women

- In general, women should dress conservatively in public as most Bangladeshi women do. The more inconspicuous and conservative the clothing, the less attention that will be drawn.
- Women will be more comfortable in public wearing sleeves and modest length dresses or long pants.
- Many wear a combination of the local shalwar kameez and western dress, depending on what they are doing that day. Shalwar kameez tends to be cooler in this hot, muggy climate, and also covers all of body.
- “Dressing more conservatively in shalwar kameez has proven to be a good gesture and it is rather fun to have clothes tailored to your size and liking also!” – a former participant
- It is a good idea to check with your workplace for dress requirements beforehand as some have specific regulations.

For Men

- Most Bangladeshi men wear Western dress at home and work, including everything from suits to business casual or jeans.
- The traditional dress for most occasions (from business to formal) is the white punjabi pajama (long white tunic-like shirt worn over close-fitting or baggy white pants). The Punjabi is particularly visible on Friday, the Muslim holiday.
- In general almost all men refrain from wearing shorts. Wearing them will be very noticeable.
- At home Bangladeshi men will generally wear a lungi (sarong-like garment) and punjabi or shirt.

General Information...

Purchasing Goods

Other than any special needs such as prescribed medicines, almost everything else, including bottled water is locally available. This includes other medical supplies, toiletries, and cosmetics. Of course, if you have a particular brand or type that you prefer be sure to bring it along with you. If not, try the local varieties and dive right in!

Camera & Tape Recorder



You will definitely want to bring a camera with extra film and batteries. Alkaline batteries are available but are expensive. Also think about bringing a good quality, small tape recorder as has been suggested by many participants. Taping music programs, lectures, street sounds, conversation with people and a myriad of other things adds that quality of authentic sound to any tape presentation you may make.

Gifts for Special People

Many people have suggested bringing a few gifts for special people that you will meet during your stay. Bangladeshis are very hospitable and friendly. You will surely make new friends during your stay, and perhaps want to return the favor. Since you will also be visiting schools and other social sites, a group gift could be appropriate. Small gifts are also a wonderful way to spread goodwill. Perhaps handicrafts or things you have made, music, memorabilia and lapel pins, sports buttons, art work and small U.S. flags on desk stands are all suggestions. Participants have brought both major and minor gifts in the past, it is entirely up to you.

Shopping

While this trip is not a buying excursion, shopping is one of the great experiences of visiting another country. Try to visit the non-tourist market areas, the small single-purpose shops, and those that allow the visitor a glimpse of the 'real' culture. Many items are worth a look, such as woven textiles and clothing, local jewelry, bamboo or cane basket ware, shell-crafts, traditional pottery, unique musical instruments, pink pearls, and beautiful Bengali art.

Most Bangladeshi shopkeepers do not have fixed prices, so be prepared to barter unless you are shopping at a larger commercial store. Prices initially offered to you will be significantly higher, if not twice the price for non-foreigners. Try offering what you think the product is worth and negotiate from there.

Some Handy Tips

- **Health**

You will have access to the U.S. medical facilities, nursing staff, and doctor. All are located at the U.S. Embassy, Dhaka. Most visitors experience food-related sickness during their stay. If this occurs, remember to stay hydrated. Don't be embarrassed if you feel under the weather, chances are all of your companions have before too!

- **Embassy Commissary**

You may visit the commissary to purchase grocery items, located across the street on the East side of the Embassy at the GSO compound.

- **Embassy Motor Pool**

Motor pool will only be provided for your arrival and departure from Bangladesh. For other travel, you will be required to use local transportation.

- **Money**

Taka, the local currency, is available from a variety of resources. American Express has exchange and ATM locations at the Embassy and at other locations. Other ATM's are plentiful in cities, and provide Taka when making a withdrawal.

- **American Club**

The American Club is located in Gulshan-2 area, Dhaka. If you wish to become a club member while in Bangladesh, you will have to apply for regular membership under Category I (Embassy direct hire). You will have to pay a refundable deposit of \$100 and a monthly fee of \$30 for single and \$60 for family membership. Application forms are available at the Club. Facility, membership, and other interesting information is available on their website at:

(new) <http://www.americanclubdhaka.com/>
(old) <http://clubsbd.com/american/index.php?pageId=68>

- **Housing**

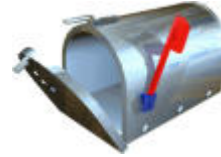
There are some resources that may help you with your housing search. Try posting a bulletin at the American Club website (see above). Most expat clubs have postings for housing that is available to rent. Your entry will be able to be viewed here and through other club websites. Also try submitting to "The Jute" (US Mission newsletter) by DhakaJute@state.gov, viewable at The American Club website.

Some Handy Tips (con't)

• Other Information

- **Hartals-** These general strikes will be a unique part of your stay in Bangladesh. Political parties generally call hartals in advance. In most cities and towns, businesses simply close down for the day (usually from dawn to noon or till dusk). Enjoy the clear, quiet streets, but for your own safety try to avoid large demonstrations.
- **Getting Around-** Local transportation consists of buses, taxis, baby taxis, auto-rickshaws, and the famous rickshaws. Taxis and buses have proven to be the safest. Rickshaws are unstable and often dangerous. If you must try this local pastime, or the auto-rickshaws, avoid doing so after dusk for your own protection. Westerners have been robbed and attacked after being set-up in this way.
- **Tips & Begging-** Formal welfare is almost non-existent for most Bangladeshis that are struggling with poverty. Tips and begging have become a part of the culture. It is up to you if you wish to give hand-outs or money to the poor, and who you chose to give it to.
- **Currency-** The local 'Taka' is approximately valued at 60Tk = \$1. The notes come in One, Two, Five, Ten, Twenty, Fifty, One Hundred and Five Hundred Taka denominations. There are smaller denomination coins, but except for the one and five Taka coins, most are out of circulation. The notes generally have English numerals on them, but to make things more exciting, same denomination notes may be printed in different sizes, designs, and colors. Avoid accepting excessively old, torn, or mended notes as you it may be difficult for you to convince shopkeepers to accept them.

Postal Services



Diplomatic Pouch

Fulbright grantees are authorized to make a one-time shipment of educational materials to the American Embassy in Dhaka. This shipment cannot exceed four boxes, none of which may weigh more than 40 pounds. These materials cannot be sent back to the United States by pouch. Address these packages to:

Cultural Affairs Officer,
AmEmbassy Dhaka
Department of State
Washington, DC 20521-6120

- The grantee's name must appear in the return address.

Fulbright grantees may also use the pouch for letter mail up to two pounds to and from the United States. Letters must be addressed as follows:

Jane Doe, Fulbright
AmEmbassy Dhaka
Department of State
Washington, DC 20521-6120

- Grantees will use this address as the return address on all mail from abroad.
- Grantees may pick up their mail at The American Center (see contact information).

Shipping

There are several private courier companies in Bangladesh. The yellow pages section in the telephone book (called 'directory' in Bangladesh) will list many companies. Reliable ones include Federal Express, DHL, and other familiar companies.

Homebound Packers & Shippers has been used regularly by Embassy staff and is very reliable. Those residing in Chittagong or other cities may want to take advantage of their regularly scheduled cargo shipments in order to move supplies.

As with most industries in Bangladesh, beware of smaller private businesses posing as familiar and reputable international businesses, often with very similar names or logos. Also note that private courier shipping from Bangladesh to the United States is *EXTREMELY* expensive.

Travel



Getting Here!

Many international carriers fly to Zia International Airport in Dhaka. Be sure to check with those listed below for the best rates, times, or just to try something different!

Public Affairs and other US Embassy staff will expedite your arrival and departure from Bangladesh at the beginning and end of your stay. They will meet you after your flight, facilitate the customs process, and provide transport from the airport.

Travel in Bangladesh

Travel between Bangladesh's major cities is easiest through one of two domestic air carriers, Bangladesh Biman or GMG. Other forms of transportation between centers are by rail or bus. All types are quite affordable compared to U.S. standards. The quality of services offered and performed varies depending on your destination, quality of transport desired, and congestion en route. Overall, travelers should be prepared for delays during all types of travel. Therefore, it is recommended that you allow extra time for any travel within Bangladesh.

Air

These airlines offer many daily flights around Bangladesh. In general, there is a 45lbs baggage allowance for domestic flights. More information can be found at the following websites:

- *Bangladesh Biman (the national airline):* <http://www.bimanair.com/>
 - Many flights are offered but frequently delayed.
- *GMG:* <http://www.gmgairlines.com/>
 - Flights are more reliable but company has fewer planes. This could cause cancellation of the last daily flights.

Rail

Air conditioned passenger trains are available for reasonable rates. These tickets should be purchased at least 3 days in advance.

- *Dhaka – Chittagong:* Ticket price (approx.) is 375Tk (\$6.25) or 450Tk (\$7.50) for a compartment.

Bus

Air conditioned coaches are also available for reasonable prices.

- *Dhaka – Chittagong:* Ticket price (approx.) is 500Tk (\$8.33).

Suggested Pre-Departure Briefing

Reading

- **Bangladesh: Reflections on the Water**
By James J. Novak
 - Novak discusses the culture, beauty, history, and economy of Bangladesh. This book is now over a decade old and the political situation has changed greatly since it was written, yet his perspective is unique for a Western writer and certainly deserves a read.
- **Lonely Planet Bangladesh** (of the Lonely Planet Series)
By Richard Plunkett, et al.
 - The only comprehensive English-language travel guide to Bangladesh. Provides the real facts, hints, and suggestions that have made this series so popular.
- **Lonely Planet Bengali Phrasebook** (of the Lonely Planet Series)
By Bimal Maity
 - While many Bangladeshis speak very good English, try learning to speak their native language and look up some of your favorite phrases in the process!

Important Websites

The following websites have been recommended by our Information Resource Center for both junior and senior scholars interested in learning more about Bangladesh.

U.S. Embassy - Dhaka

<http://www.usembassy-dhaka.org/>

Bangladesh: The country at a glance

<http://www.bangladoot.org/bangladesh-at-a-glance-bangladoot.pdf>

Bangladesh: Climate

http://banglapedia.search.com.bd/HT/C_0288.htm

Bangladesh: Education

http://banglapedia.search.com.bd/HT/E_0022.htm

Cultural Mosaic of Bangladesh

<http://www.bangladoot.org/Cultural%20mosaic.doc>

Bangladesh Government websites:

Bangladesh Government's website

<http://www.bangladesh.gov.bd/>

Board of Investment, Bangladesh

<http://www.boibd.org/>

Bangladesh Embassy: Washington DC

<http://www.bangladoot.org/>

Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations

<http://www.un.int/bangladesh/>

Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh:

American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham)

<http://www.amchambd.org/>

Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industries

<http://www.dhakachamber.com/>

Museums/Libraries:

National Archives and National Library of Bangladesh

<http://dhrubo.dynip.com/narchives-nlibrarybd/>

Bangladesh National Museum

<http://www.bangladeshmuseum.org/>

Banglapedia

<http://banglapedia.search.com.bd/>

Virtual Bangladesh

<http://www.virtualbangladesh.com/>

BangladeshNet

<http://www.bangladesh.net/>

Art and Culture:

Virtual Bangladesh: Arts and Culture

<http://www.virtualbangladesh.com/culture/>

Drik Photo Library

<http://www.drik.net/>

Ricksha Arts of Bangladesh

<http://www.ricksha.org/>

Bangladesh Think Tanks/Research Organizations:

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies

<http://www.bids-bd.org/>

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies

<http://biiss.org/>

Centre for Policy Dialogue

<http://www.cpd-bangladesh.org/>

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute

<http://www.bei-bd.org/>

American Institute of Bangladesh Studies

<http://www.aibs.net/>

Universities:

University Grants Commission of Bangladesh

<http://www.ugc.org/>

University of Dhaka

<http://www.univdhaka.edu/>

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET)

<http://www.buet.ac.bd/>

Jahangirnagar University

<http://www.juniv.edu/>

Universities (con't):

North South University

<http://www.northsouth.edu/>

The Independent University, Bangladesh

<http://www.iub-bd.edu/>

East West University

<http://www.ewubd.edu/>

Newspapers:

The Daily Star

<http://www.thedailystar.net/>

The Independent

<http://www.independent-bangladesh.com/>

New Age

<http://www.newagebd.com/>

The New Nation

<http://nation.ittefaq.com/>

The News Today

<http://www.newstoday-bd.com>

Weekly Holiday

<http://www.weeklyholiday.net/edit.html>

Bangladesh Observer

<http://www.bangladeshobserveronline.com/>

Political Parties:

Bangladesh Awami League

<http://www.albd.org/>

Bangladesh National Party (BNP)

<http://www.bnkbd.com/>

Jatiya Party

<http://www.jatiyaparty.org/>

Political Parties (con't):

Jamaat-e-islami

<http://www.jamaat-e-islami.org/>

NGO's:

NGOs in Bangladesh

<http://www.bangladoot.org/ngos-in-bangladesh-bangladoot.pdf>

Association for Social Advancement (ASA)

<http://www.asabd.org/>

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

<http://www.brac.net/>

Grameen

<http://www.grameen-info.org/>

Useful Bengali Words and Phrases

Conversation

Forgive me, Excuse Me

Yes

O.K.

No

In lieu of good morning or good evening

Response

How are you?

I am quite well

May I know your name please?

My name is ...

Where do you live?

I live in (Gulshan)

Give me a little more

No more

I have finished

Very good

Do you like it?

I like it very much

Thank you

To take leave of a person or group

Mahp kor-ben

Jee

Thik achhey

Naa

As-Salamu-Alai-Kum

Waalaikum As-saalam (short is “salam”)

Aapni kamon achh-en?

Ami besh Bhalo achhi

Doya koray aapnar naam bol-ben ki?

Almar naam ...

Aapni ko-thai thaak-en?

Ami (Gulshan)-e thak-ee

Aamakay aar ektoo den

Aar naa

Ami shesh korechhee

Khoob bhaa-low

Apni kee eta pochhondo ko-ren?

Ami khoob pochhondo kor-ee

Dho-nno-baad

Khoda-hafez

Interrogatives

Who?

Kay?

What?

Kee?

When?

Kau-khon?

Where?

Why?

Kan-o?

How?

Kamon?

Conjunctions

And

Aar, Ebong

Or

Bah

But

Keen-too

If

Jo-dee

Travel, Sightseeing, Directions

Distance

Duur

Place

Jai-gah

Road

Raa-sta

Direction

Deek

Right

Daan

Left

Baam

Name

Naam

Building

Daa-laan

Here

E-kha-nay

There

Oi-kha-nay

Ahead

Aa-gay

Slowly

Aa-stay

Stop

Tha-moon

Mile

Mile

How far?

Kauto duur?

Which road?

Kon raa-sta?

How much time?

Kauto sho-moy?

In which direction?

Kon dee-kay?

Quickly

Taa-rah-taa-ree

Too far

Au-nek duur

Near
Far

Kaa-chhe
Duu-ray

To the left
To the right

Baa-may
Daa-nay

Shopping

Money
Change
Gold
Silver
Pearl
Cotton
Wool
Paper
Shop
Book
Inch

Tah-kah
Bhang-tee
Shoh-nah
Roopa
Moh-tee, Mukhta
Too-lah
ool
Kah-goj
Doh-kahm
Bo-ee
Inchee
Where can I get...?
How much does it cost?

Feet
Cloth
Yard
Dozen

Foot
Kah-por
Gawj
Daw-jawn

Kothai pah-way jah-ay...?
Dahm koh toh?

Foods

Almonds
Apples
Banana
Beans (green)
Butter
Cabbage
Carrot
Cashew Nut
Cauliflower
Celery
Cheese
Chicken
Coconut
Corn
Crab
Cucumber
Duck
Eggplant
Eggs
Fig
Fish
Grapes
Greens
Guava
Ice
Lamb
Lemon/Lime

Bah-dam
Apple
Kaw-la
Borboti
Mah-Khon
Badha-kopee
Gah-jor Papaya
Kaju badam
Phool kopee
Celery
Pah-neer
Murghi
Nar-kel
Bhootah
Kahk-rah
Sosha, Khee-rai
Hahsh
Bay-goon
Deem
Doo-muur
Mach
Angoor
Shobjee
Amrood
Bor-off
Bhey-rah
Laboo

Lettuce
Mango
Meat
Milk
Olives
Oranges
Pap-pay
Peaches
Peanut
Pears
Peas
Pineapples
Pistachio
Pomegranate
Potato
Prawns
Pumpkin
Radish
Raisins
Spinach
Squash
Sugar
Sweet Potato
Tomato
Vegetables
Walnut
Watermelon

Lay-toosh
Aam
Mansho
Dood
Pay-ahj
Kaw-maw-lah laboo

Peaches
Cheenbadam
Naspati
Mattar
Ah-nah-rawsh
Pista
Bay-dah-nah
Aalu
Chigree
Mish-tee Koom-row
Moola
Keesh-mesh
Shahk-bee-shesh
Lah-oo jah-tee-o-tor-kalrree
Chee-nee
Mish-tee aalu
Tomato
Shob-jie
Ahk-roat
Tarmooj

Things To Avoid...

While Bangladesh has many enjoyable aspects, there are also some less welcome features. The following list is based on our recommendations.

Try to avoid the following:

- uncooked vegetables and salads when dining in local restaurants and hotels.
- drinking tap water, including for brushing teeth. Bottled water is available in all hotels, restaurants and local stores. Make sure the seal on the cap is unbroken or is broken in front of you.
- wearing revealing western clothes in markets and crowded areas, especially women and in the old part of the city. The more inconspicuous and conservative clothing, the less attention will be drawn.
- being taken out for a ride by the shopkeepers! You may need to bargain a lot before purchasing an item.
- public physical contact or displays of intimacy between men and women, between traveling companions of the opposite sex (even married ones) or with Bangladeshis. It is viewed as culturally insensitive.
- the “thumb’s up” signal. In Bangladesh, it’s considered obscene.
- aggressively shaking hands with women. Although many Bangladeshi women do not mind shaking hands, some conservative women are uncomfortable with this practice. Let the woman offer her hand first.
- sitting with a foot pointing toward another person. It’s discourteous.
- sunburn. In Bangladesh, you can get sunburn surprisingly quickly, even on cloudy days. Use a sunscreen and take extra care to cover areas that don’t normally see sun, e.g., your feet. A hat provides added protection. If you overindulge, Calamine lotion (available locally) is good for mild sunburn.

Contact Information

- **Location of the Public Affairs Office:**

The American Center

Momenshahi House

House 110, Road 27

Banani, Dhaka-1213

Bangladesh

Phone: Number: 881-3440

Calling From Overseas To Country Code: (880)

Dhaka City Code: (2) + Number

- **Points of First Contact for Inquiries (*at The American Center*):**

Junior Fulbright Advisor

Shaheen Khan

Email: KhanSA@state.gov

Senior Fulbright Advisor

Parveen Elias

Email: EliasPX@state.gov

- **Additional Contacts (*at The American Center*):**

Deputy Public Affairs Officer

Michelle Jones

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- **Location of the United States Embassy**

U.S. Embassy

Madani Avenue

Baridhara, Dhaka, Bangladesh

- **Located at the Embassy**

Direct Dial:

- Health Unit: 885-5500-22, 882-2103 & 882-2472

Dial the Embassy first, then:

- Community Liaison Office (CLO): x 2761, x 2330
- Regional Security Office (RSO): x 2228

- **Fellow Fulbrighters**

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